Energy Storage Association
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March 8, 2016

Senator Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Senate Appropriations Committee
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Senate Appropriations Committee
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Feinstein,

We are writing to encourage you to support increased research and development funding for energy storage technologies in the FY 2017 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill. We respectfully request that you provide robust support for the energy storage R&D account at the Department of Energy's Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability (EDER), as well as continued support for the Joint Center for Energy Storage Research and energy storage activities in ARPA-E and DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE).

ESA promotes the development and commercialization of safe, competitive, and reliable energy storage delivery systems for use by electricity suppliers and their customers. ESA's membership comprises a diverse group of more than 200 energy sector stakeholders, including electric utilities, energy service companies, independent power producers, technology developers – of advanced batteries, flywheels, thermal energy storage, compressed air energy storage, supercapacitors, and other technologies – component suppliers, and system integrators.

Highly flexible and affordable energy storage solutions are increasingly critical to ensure the efficiency and reliability of the power sector across the geography of the United States. In simplest terms, storage enables energy that is generated to be used at a later time, when it is most needed. Using energy storage can save households and businesses money by reducing the amount of spare capacity, in the form of excess power plants and wires, that utilities need to build to meet peak system demands. Energy storage also makes the grid more reliable by evening out fluctuations in supply and demand and serving as back-up for disruptions to supply and outages. Similarly, energy storage allows integration of a larger supply of clean energy by compensating for the natural variability of wind and solar power. And energy storage is an increasingly critical tool for rural communities and microgrids, where all capacity must be used as efficiently as possible.

Funding and program direction to support DOE stage-gated, scalable, and cost-shared R&D research can accelerate improvements in energy storage and spur the next generation of systems. With targeted investments in specific technologies, modern energy storage solutions can realistically be projected to set new benchmarks for efficiency, utility, and cost, stabilizing the grid to enable the continued growth of renewable power generation. DOE's portfolio of efforts, primarily in EDER and secondarily in ARPA-E and EERE, continue to serve as an important pipeline of discoveries and inventions for private sector innovators to translate into commercial products and services.

While fiscal constraints make appropriations decisions challenging, we respectfully request that you help ensure that the United States maintains a leading competitive position in the fast-growing world marketplace for energy storage. On behalf of the member companies of ESA, we look forward to working with you and your Senate colleagues to support critical technology investments in storage that opens a path to more affordable electricity from a more resilient and cleaner grid.

Sincerely,

Jason Burwen
Policy & Advocacy Director, Energy Storage Association